



Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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Pitcher Plant Borer

Papaipema appassionate

State Status: **Threatened**

Federal Status: None

Description: The Pitcher Plant Borer is a noctuid moth with a brick-red thorax and matching color on the forewings in the basal and terminal areas; the median area of the forewings is straw yellow, the white reniform spot large, and the white orbicular spot of varying size, often with two identical spots below it. The hind wings are pinkish-tan. Wingspan is 28-38 mm.

Habitat: The Pitcher Plant Borer inhabits acidic *Sphagnum* bogs with pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*).

Life History: Adult moths fly in late August and September. Eggs overwinter, hatching in the spring. Larvae bore into and feed internally on the roots of pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*), also consuming leaves in later instars. Larvae pupate by early August.

Range: The Pitcher Plant Borer is found from southeastern Canada south along the coastal plain to South Carolina, and in the north, west to Wisconsin; populations are rare and localized throughout this range. There are currently only three populations of this species documented in Massachusetts.



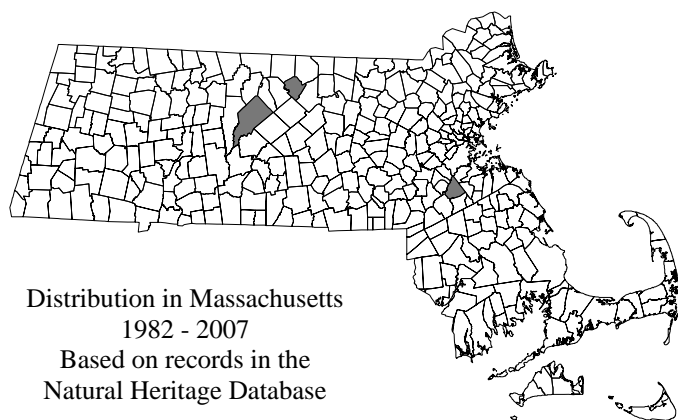
Photo by M.W. Nelson

Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

Threats

- Habitat loss
- Hydrologic alteration
- Invasion by exotic plants
- Insecticide spraying
- Off-road vehicles
- Light pollution



Distribution in Massachusetts
1982 - 2007

Based on records in the
Natural Heritage Database